these activities contribute not merely to the physical development of the children but also have a positive impact on psychological and mental development.

Vocational education to poor uneducated rural youth/women

434. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any policy for providing vocational education to the poor uneducated rural youth/women in the country particularly in the States of NER;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the effective measures being taken by the Government to create job opportunities by providing skilled/vocational education to the above categories?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI) (a) to (c) In pursuance of the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education at + 2 level was formulated and is being implemented since 1987-88. While implementing the Scheme, priority is being given to the backward areas and also States in the North Eastern Region. Preference is also being given to the women specific vocational courses and to the introduction of skill based courses according to the felt needs.

SSA without Panchayati Raj Institutions

435. DR. E. M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' (SSA) is being implemented in certain States without involving the Panchayati Raj Institutions which are constitutionally empowered to look after the elementary education; and

(b) if so, what steps are contemplated by Government to involve and implement SSA through PRI Act?